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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/890,455	03/12/2002	Hiroaki Inoue	2001-1091A	3064

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EXAMINER

GURLEY, LYNNE ANN

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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2812

DATE MAILED: 12/31/2002

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Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.
09/890,455

Applicant(s)
Inoue et al.

Examiner
Lynne Gurley

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2812



-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136 (a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on Oct 10, 2002
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11; 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 5-17 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above, claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 5-7 and 10-15 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☒ Claim(s) 8, 9, 16, and 17 is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claims _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on Nov 26, 2001 is/are a) ☐ accepted or b) ☒ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- 11) ☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on _____ is: a) ☐ approved b) ☐ disapproved by the Examiner.
If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
- 12) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 13) ☒ Acknowledgement is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some* c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 - ☒ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- *See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) ☐ Acknowledgement is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e).
- a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 15) ☐ Acknowledgement is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). _____
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s). 3/7 6) ☐ Other:

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DETAILED ACTION

Election/Restriction

1. Claims 1-4 have been withdrawn from further consideration pursuant to 37 CFR 1.142(b) as being drawn to a nonelected invention, there being no allowable generic or linking claim.

Election was made without traverse in Paper No. 9.

Furthermore, it is noted that the non-elected claims have been canceled by Applicant in Paper No. 9.

Information Disclosure Statement

2. The information disclosure statement filed 8/1/01 fails to comply with 37 CFR 1.98(a)(3) because it does not include a concise explanation of the relevance, as it is presently understood by the individual designated in 37 CFR 1.56© most knowledgeable about the content of the information, of each patent listed that is not in the English language. It has been placed in the application file, but the information referred to therein has not been considered.

Specifically, document 61 227176 has not been considered because it was not submitted with an abstract in English.

Drawings

3. The drawings are objected to because Figure 2 should be designated by a legend such as --Prior Art-- because only that which is old is illustrated. See MPEP § 608.02(g). A proposed

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drawing correction or corrected drawings are required in reply to the Office action to avoid abandonment of the application. The objection to the drawings will not be held in abeyance. A proposed drawing correction or corrected drawings are required in reply to the Office action to avoid abandonment of the application. The objection to the drawings will not be held in abeyance.

Specification

4. The specification has not been checked to the extent necessary to determine the presence of all possible minor errors. Applicant's cooperation is requested in correcting any errors of which applicant may become aware in the specification.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

5. The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

6. Claims 10 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention. It is unclear whether claim 10 is dependent or independent because of the following antecedent basis problem. Claim 10 recites the limitation "said electroless copper plating liquid" in lines 4-5. There is insufficient antecedent basis for this limitation in the claim.

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Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

7. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless -

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

8. Claims 10-14 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being clearly anticipated by Endo et al. (EP 0 692 554, dated 7/12/95).

Endo shows the method as claimed in the second embodiment and Figures 2-7 and corresponding text where copper is used for the electroless deposition process. Cupric sulfate is used (page 10) as the copper ion source, formaldehyde is used as the reducing agent, ethylenediaminetetraacetic acid is used as the complexing agent and pH and pH control agents as well as a stabilizer are used with some organic components. A deposition speed for the copper is 3 microns/hour.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

9. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

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10. The factual inquiries set forth in *Graham v. John Deere Co.*, 383 U.S. 1, 148 USPQ 459 (1966), that are applied for establishing a background for determining obviousness under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) are summarized as follows:

1. Determining the scope and contents of the prior art.
2. Ascertaining the differences between the prior art and the claims at issue.
3. Resolving the level of ordinary skill in the pertinent art.
4. Considering objective evidence present in the application indicating obviousness or nonobviousness.

This application currently names joint inventors. In considering patentability of the claims under 35 U.S.C. 103(a), the examiner presumes that the subject matter of the various claims was commonly owned at the time any inventions covered therein were made absent any evidence to the contrary. Applicant is advised of the obligation under 37 CFR 1.56 to point out the inventor and invention dates of each claim that was not commonly owned at the time a later invention was made in order for the examiner to consider the applicability of 35 U.S.C. 103© and potential 35 U.S.C. 102(e), (f) or (g) prior art under 35 U.S.C. 103(a).

11. Claims 5-6 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Endo et al. (EP 0 692 554, dated 7/12/95) in view of Shin (JP 2000183160, dated 6/30/00, filed 12/11/98).

Endo shows the method substantially as claimed in the preceding paragraphs.

Endo lacks anticipation only in not teaching that the method may be applied as reinforcement to a previously deposited seed layer or as an auxiliary seed layer.

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Shin teaches in a similar copper electroless plating method, the deposition of a copper seed layer used as a reinforcing copper seed layer.

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to have used the concept of an auxiliary seed layer taught in Shin in the method of Endo since both methods are compatible with electroless plating processes and to solve the problem of void formation in ~~high~~ high aspect ratio contact openings as taught in Shin.

Claims 7 and 15 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Endo et al. (EP 0 692 554, dated 7/12/95) in view of Shin (JP 2000183160, dated 6/30/00, filed 12/11/98) and further in view of Kikuchi et al. (US 4,563,217, dated 1/7/86).

Endo shows the method substantially as claimed in the preceding paragraphs.

Endo lacks anticipation only in not teaching that the method may be applied as reinforcement to a previously deposited seed layer or as an auxiliary seed layer and that polyoxyethylene may be used.

Shin teaches the reinforcing/auxiliary copper seed layer.

Kikuchi teaches in a similar electroless copper plating process using copper ions, complexing agents, reducing agents and pH adjusters, the use of polyoxyethylene series surface active agents to enhance the deposition process (abstract, column 1, lines 55-68; column 2; column 3.

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to have added the polyoxyethylene series surface active agent to the plating solution for the reasons given in Kikuchi

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which state primarily that these active agents are conventionally used by one of ordinary skill in the art.

Allowable Subject Matter

12. Claims 8-9 and 16-17 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but at this time would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.


Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Lynne A. Gurley whose telephone number is (703) 305-3474. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Friday from 7:30 AM to 4:00 PM.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, John F. Niebling, can be reached on (703) 308-3325. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is (703) 308-7722.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is (703) 308-0956.

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December 30, 2002


LYNNE GURLEY
PATENT EXAMINER
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